

Options ReportAdministrative Design Review

Draft

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Summary

Design Review has been a part of Seattle's land use and development approvals since 1994. The program has changed over time and currently includes two tiers: 1) a design review board process for evaluation of large commercial, multi-family and mixed use projects by appointed neighborhood-based boards; and 2) an administrative (staff level) design review for projects below a design review threshold when a project proponent seeks departure from a code.

In 2008 Seattle Department of Planning and Development (DPD) began exploring expansion of Administrative Design Review to evaluate more types of development in response to input from the public and elected officials. City staff are exploring the establishment of administrative design review for townhouse residential projects fewer than eight units (the current threshold for review in most zones). This development type is currently not reviewed. At the same time, the staff seeks to reevaluate the Administrative Design Review process in an effort to make efficient use of staff resources and reduce permit processing times and added costs associated with administrative design reviews.

From October through December 2008, feedback on the existing Administrative Design Review in Seattle was gathered from architects, developers, neighborhood representatives and DPD land use planning staff in small meetings, via one-on-one telephone interviews and in two large group working sessions. In all of these settings, attendees were offered the opportunity to suggest improvements to the existing system or entirely new ways of conducting review to achieve desired outcomes. This solution-oriented feedback was used to generate three options:

Option 1: Existing Administrative Design Review

Option 2: Streamlined Administrative Design Review

Option 3: Pre-Approved Plans

These three options were described in diagrammatic form and presented for review and discussion at a public meeting held on January 29, 2009. Approximately 40 people attended: many of the DPD staff and community members contacted in the fall along with nearly a dozen people engaging for the first time. Feedback gathered at that meeting forms the core of this report. In addition to identifying benefits and issues anticipated by the implementation of each scheme, minor refinements to the schemes themselves were offered. With this feedback, the schemes can now be considered actionable design review packages that the City could implement legislatively.

From these options a recommended Administrative Design Review process that meets the desired outcomes will be developed. The Status Report published January 20, 2009 identified desired outcomes:

Performance

- ADR expansion should be supported by staff
- ADR expansion should be supported by stakeholders
- Streamline the ADR and permitting processes
- Ensure consistency of the processes from project to project
- Staff skills should include design knowledge
- Use staff training and organization to create a qualified ADR team

Design

- Improve project design
- Achieve better site design by considering development standard departures
- Explore development of standard plans
- Create a multi-level system of review that tailors to project complexity

Financial

• Reduce costs of Administrative Design Review

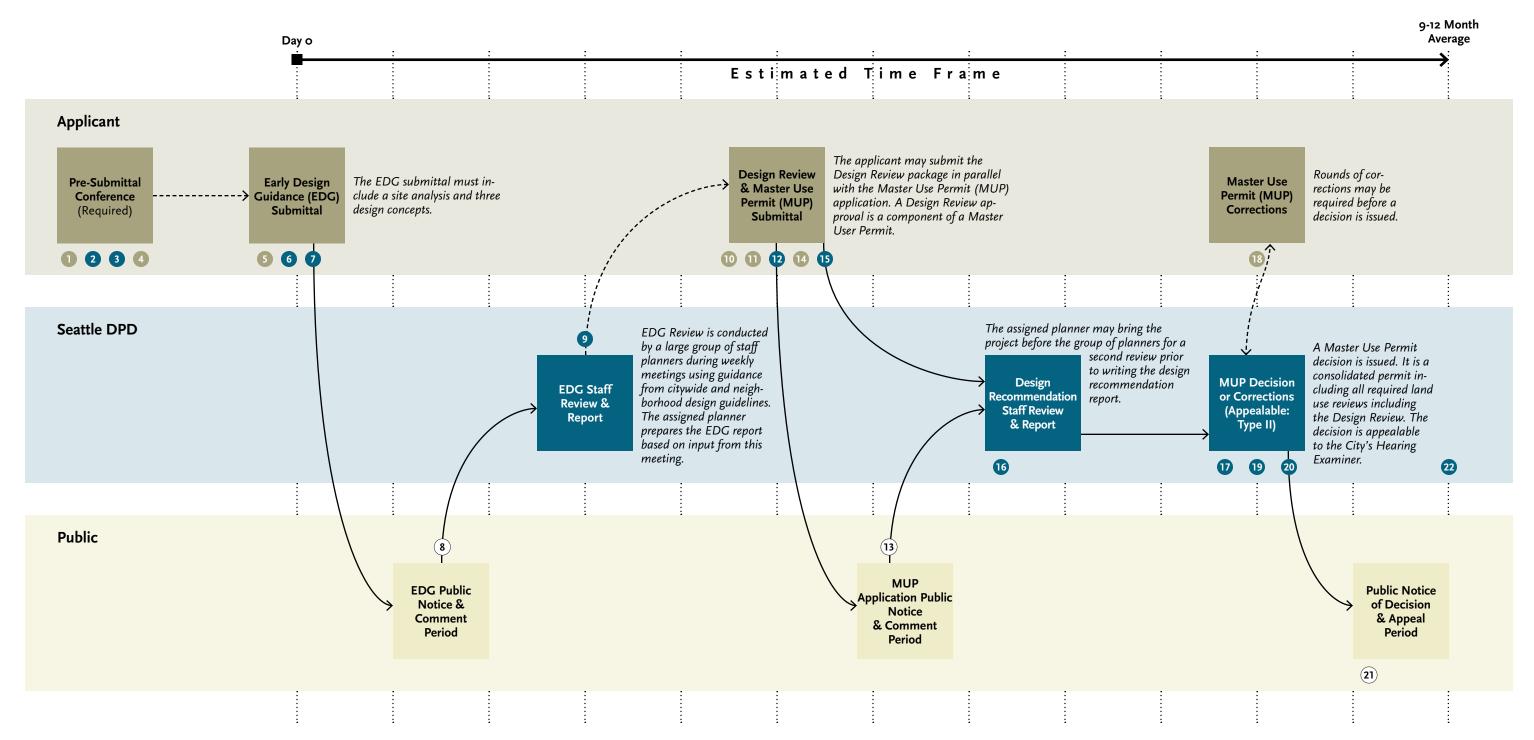
Community

· Preserve, and potentially improve the public comment opportunity

Option 1: Apply Existing Administrative Design Review

Option 1 would require all townhouse projects to undergo the existing Administrative Design Review (ADR) process. The existing ADR process outlined below 'mirrors' the format of the city's typical Design Review process, with staff planners contucting the review in lieu of the appointed neighborhood Design Review boards. A separate and distinct staff-level design review process specifically for Administrative Design Review has not yet been created in Seattle.

- · Mirrors the Design Review Board process
- Two public notice periods
- Allows development standard departures
- Appealable Decision (Type II)



Option 1: Apply Existing Administrative Design Review

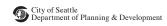
	Applicant	Seattle DPD	Public	Fee & Staff Hours
Pre-submittal	 Applicant applies for a project number by completing and sending in a Preliminary Application form to the Applicant Services Center. The applicant must also fill out a Pre-Application Site Visit (PASV) form for a fee of \$124.50, these two things can happen simultaneously. Once a project number has been acquired and the site visit for the PASV has taken place, the applicant can then apply for the Pre-Submittal Conference (PSC) by filling out the Pre-Submittal Conference Application (PSCA) and sending it in to the Applicant Services Center. Forms and instructions are available online at www.seattle.gov/dpd/publications/forms, or from the Applicant Services Center (ASC), 20th floor, Seattle Municipal Tower, 700 Fifth Ave. Completed forms may be dropped off, mailed or faxed to the ASC. Both the applicant and the planner must attend the PSC. The applicant may request, on the PSCA, other DPD or SDOT staff to be present in order to address outstanding site questions. It is not necessary for building planners to be present, but if the applicant has building questions at this stage he or she can request a building permit representative be present. This meeting can be informational, meaning the applicant addresses site, project and process concerns, or if the applicant is familiar with the process, and doesn't have any major concerns/ questions, the applicant can choose to apply for the Early Design Guidance (EDG) portion of the process. Fees for PSCs and additional hours of review are listed in the current version of the Fee Subtitle available online on DPD's "Fees" page at www.seattle.gov/dpd/about/fees. 	 2 A DPD planner is assigned from a group of roughly 18 discretionary planners capable of performing full design reviews. 3 The planner shall review the PSCA and make sure they are prepared for the PSC and also make sure that they have invited all relevant and requested DPD/SDOT staff. 		\$124.50 + Planner Review Fee (typically 4 hours at \$250/ hour for research, site visit and pre-submittal meeting)
Early Design Guidance	If the applicant chooses to apply for EDG, they must prepare an EDG submittal package. CAMs 105 (drop off submittals) and 238 (Design Review: General Information, Application Instructions, and Submittal Requirements) detail the EDG submittal requirements. Forms and instructions are available online at www.seattle.gov/dpd/publications/ forms, or from the Applicant Services Center (ASC), 20th floor, Seattle Municipal Tower, 700 Fifth Ave. Completed forms may be dropped off, mailed or faxed to the ASC. The intent of the EDG package is to present an initial design proposal for review. The applicant shall provide 3 copies of an 11x17 EDG packet (See CAM 238 Part III) which includes 1 fully developed schematic design concept. Other specific items required at the time of EDG submittal include: • Signed Letter of Authorization • Signed Financial Responsibility Form • Completed Drop-off Submittal Fee Worksheet and a check for \$2,070.00 (which covers the EDG meeting, the intake appointment, and the notice fees for ADR) • Copy of PASV • Copy of PASV • Copy of Preliminary Application • Completed Application (See CAM 238) Attachment A, 3 copies of 11x17 EDG packet (See CAM 238 Part III) • Copy of Pre-Submittal Conference Meeting Minute Notes (can be sent to planner after completion).	 The planner has 5 days to determine that the EDG application is complete. After an application has been accepted, the public comment period will commence once the planner 'notices' the proposed project, through mailers, to residents and property owners within 300 feet of the site as well as with a yellow placard posted at the project site. Notice requirements are specified in SMC 23.76.011. No specific time frame between acceptance of the application and issuance of notice is given. Notice of the application is also provided in DPD's weekly Land Use Information Bulletin (available online at www.seattle.gov/dpd/notices). The public comment period will allow citizens to comment on any and all aspects of the project, including siting and design issues. The planner has an additional 2 weeks, after the comment period to complete a Guidance Report generated from review of the packet, the city guidelines, staff suggestions (through an internal DPD meeting—some description of this meeting/format/level of formality etc.) and comments received from the public notice. Design Guidance must be derived from the city's formally adopted Design Guidelines for Commercial and Multifamily Buildings and supplemental Neighborhood Design Guidelines. 	The community members have 2 weeks to submit comments regarding the proposal as specified in the notice procedures per SMC 23.76.011. Comments from community members are most effective when they address elements within the purview of the DR process, such as architectural concept and consistency and exterior finish materials.	\$2,070.00 (includes 6 hours at \$250/hour for review and documentation)

Option 1: Apply Existing Administrative Design Review

	Applicant	Seattle DPD	Public	Fee & Staff Hours
Design Review & Master Use Permit	 Once the applicant has received the Guidance, they are permitted to schedule a Master Use Permit intake appointment. A MUP is a consolidated permit including all required land use reviews, including the Design Review. Therefore all projects undergoing Design Review, including ADR, are required to enter the MUP process. The applicant shall utilize the 'Guidance' from the planner to produce the MUP set. It is the applicant's responsibility to make sure that all 'Guidance' is addressed. Failure to do so may add significant time to the process due to additional comment/correction rounds. Fees for MUP submittals and additional hours of review are listed in the current version of the Fee Subtitle available online on DPD's "Fees" page at www.seattle.gov/dpd/about/fees. Forms and instructions are available online at www.seattle.gov/dpd/publications/forms, or from the Applicant Services Center (ASC), 20th floor, Seattle Municipal Tower, 700 Fifth Ave. Completed forms may be dropped off, mailed or faxed to the ASC. See below for list of required submittal materials. If the project is undergoing a SEPA review the applicant is responsible for making sure the 'Large White Sign' is placed on the project site, indicating that the project has submitted its SEPA application for the project site. Public Notice procedures can be found at www.seattle.gov/dpd/Notices/Land_Use_SignsNotices/default.asp. The applicant shall utilize the 'Guidance' from the planner to produce a Design Guidance Submittal Packet. This packet may be submitted in conjunction with the MUP. It is the applicant's responsibility to make sure that all 'Guidance' is addressed. Failure to do so may add significant time to the process due to additional comment/correction rounds. The Design Guidance Packet shall highlight all responses to the EDG 'guidance' and clearly describe departures requested. Additionally, the packet shall include images to aid in the Administrative Design Review decision making, such as: 3-D models Photo Monta	 The planner is notified that the large white sign has been placed on the site and it is their responsibility to commence the public notice and comment period by sending out mailers to residents and property owners within 300' of the site. Notice of application for Type II decisions shall be provided within 14 days after a determination of completeness. Notice procedures for the MUP process are specified per SMC 23.76.012. (If no SEPA review is required, the notice is only mailed.) Upon receipt of the MUP, the planner divides the plans and assigns the different review stations. Reviews are project specific, so this will not be known ahead of time. All MUPs go through an addressing station, a zoning review and an EDG/planner review by the assigned planner, at the very least. Additional reviews may include, but are not limited to: Department of Neighborhoods (DON) and Environmentally Critical Areas (ECA) review, depending on whether unique conditions on site trigger specific issues. Once the Design Guidance Packet is submitted (may be submitted with the MUP application) the planner may take the packet to a Staff Review to help prepare the Design Recommendation. (Some description of this meeting/format/level of formality etc.) From feedback generated at the meeting, the planner can then write the Design Recommendation for the project. The Design Recommendation report generally consists of several pages of text describing the project, providing background information, project proposal information, SEPA determination, identifying the priority design guidelines and staff comments, requested departures, public comments, and the recommendation. Each reviewer examines the MUP submittal for the information relevant to their specific station. If the reviewer feels the application is complete, he/she can 'approve' the plans for that particular review. However, if the reviewer feels the plans need clarifications or corrections, a Correction Notice is generated and sent to t	the date of notice.	\$2,500 (for the MUP) + Planner Review Fee (typically 6 hours at \$250/ hour for Design Review and zoning review component of Building Permit) + Building Permit Fee (based on value of proposed construction)

MUP Application Submittal Materials

- Four (4) sets of MUP level plans and drawings which include exterior materials and colors, departure documentation, and justifying, in narrative form, any requested development standard departures. The MUP set must also include: DPD cover sheet, site plan(s), floor plans and elevations.
- Attachment B (See CAM 238)
- Design Departure Matrix (a table of departure requests that compares the proposed design in quantitative terms to the code requirements)
- Signed Letter of Authorization
- Signed Financial Responsibility Form
- Copy of PASV
- A minimum of four (4) colored and shadowed elevations on a single sheet
- Colored Landscape plans
- SEPA application (if required)
- Administrative Conditional Use application (if required)



Option 1: Apply Existing Administrative Design Review

	Applicant	Seattle DPD	Public	Fee & Staff Hours
Decision	 If correction notices have been generated, the applicant is responsible for: Picking up the plans from Plans Routing within 7 days of being notified, otherwise Plans Routing will send the plans to the applicant and bill them, Responding to all correction notices by updating drawings, forms. and plan sets, and Resubmitting all plan sets back to Plans Routing for another round of review. 	 19 After all correction rounds have been completed and approved the planner issues a MUP Decision. 20 The planner issues a Notice of Decision, which is mailed to all parties of record and posted in the weekly Land Use Information Bulletin (available at www.seattle.gov/dpd/notices). The MUP is a Type II Decision; therefore, it can be appealed to the City's Hearing Examiner. Procedures are specified in SMC 23.76.022. 22 If the MUP Decision is not appealed, the planner can issue a Master Use Permit. If there are appeals, the permit cannot be issued until after the Hearing Examiner Process is complete and a decision has been made, per SMC 23.76.028. 	The community members have 2 weeks to appeal the Decision following publish of the Notice of Decision. Procedures are specified in SMC 23.76.022.	Planner Review Fee (typically 2 hours at \$250/ hour)

Option 1: Apply Existing Administrative Design Review

The summary below is based on analysis of project volume and staff time invested in Administrative Design Review over a three year period ending in September 2008. (See Status Report, pages 6–8.) Based on the data, it is projected lowering the threshold triggering design review from eight to three units, will add approximately 50 more projects to the design review workload each year. **Note**: Comparisons below are between no design review and projects that would undergo existing Administrative Design Review.

Key Features

Would not change the existing ADR review process as currently applied by DPD.

DPD Staffing & Costs

37 Design Review Planner Hours per Project

Averages from past projects indicate each project would require approximately 37 design review planner hours.

1 to 2 Additional FTEs

Since 50 additional projects each year would generate approximately 1,850 billable review hours, Option 1 would require at least one and potentially two additional planners. Assuming Planner II as the appropriate experience level, implementing this option would incur additional staffing costs of one or two planners, including salary, overhead and benefits.

Administrative, Processing and Management Cost

Implementing Option 1 would incur nominal costs in the administration and management of associated MUP permits. These costs are incurred by a range of stations and employees, making them difficult to estimate. While this option could be implemented without adding more administrators or managers, it would introduce another 50 projects with more complex processing requirements into the permitting stream, adding some modest delay to DPD's overall flow of land use permits.

Additional Fee Revenue

Since DPD fees are structured to cover the full cost of review, revenue collected under this option would cover the cost of the program. Thirty-seven (37) hours at \$250 per hour would generate an estimated \$9,250 in additional fees per project on 50 projects to yield an annual revenue of \$462,000. This amount would cover the cost of two additional planners, plus all associated administrative, processing and management costs.

Applicant Cost & Time

Additional Fees

Option 1 would add significant permitting fees to development projects that would not otherwise undergo design review. The fees are estimated to total \$9,250 per project (\$5,250 in billable planner review hours + \$1,500 for the base EDG fee + \$2,500 for the base MUP fee). Building Permit fees are based on the total value of the development project and would remain unchanged.

Added Time

Design Review under Option 1 would add approximately 7–10 months to the permitting of small townhouse projects (3–8 units). ADR projects generally take 9–12 months to reach MUP decision, compared to an average of 2 months of project review time typical for townhouse projects that do not require a MUP.

Associated Costs

Beyond permitting fees, a range of development costs would be added to small townhouse projects under Option 1. These include costs associated with holding the land and design services. A number of stakeholders estimated added cumulative costs for undergoing Option 1 at \$40,000-50,000 per townhouse project.

Public Involvement Opportunity

Early Notice and Comment Period

Option 1 proposes to add a public notice and comment opportunity early, at the Early Design Guidance stage of review. This would improve the relevance and import of public comment, since public notice under most current townhouse reviews occurs at the time of Unit Lot Subdivision after most design decisions and permitting conditions have been made.

Appealable

All townhouse projects would be subject to an appeals period to the city's Hearing Examiner after land use decision, as consistent with Type II land use decisions.

Pros

- Would improve design quality and variety of townhouse projects by bringing them all through ADR.
- Would avoid micro-permitting by lowering threshold for design review to three units.
- Could be easily implemented, as no major changes to DPD permitting procedures would be required.
- Would offer significant improvement to public's ability to comment and affect townhouse projects.

Cons

- Would require the hiring of one or two Planner II level staff, with associated costs.
- Would incur nominal costs in the administration and management of associated MUP permits.
- Would add some modest delay to DPD's overall flow of land use permits.
- Would add a potential large administrative burden due to appealability of all townhouse land use decisions.
- Would add approximately \$9,250 in additional permit fees per project for applicants.
- Would add approximately 7–9 months in permit processing time for applicants.
- Would add to townhouse project costs—estimated by some stakeholders to be \$40,000–50,000 per project.
- Would increase uncertainty for applicants due to appealability of all townhouse land use decisions.

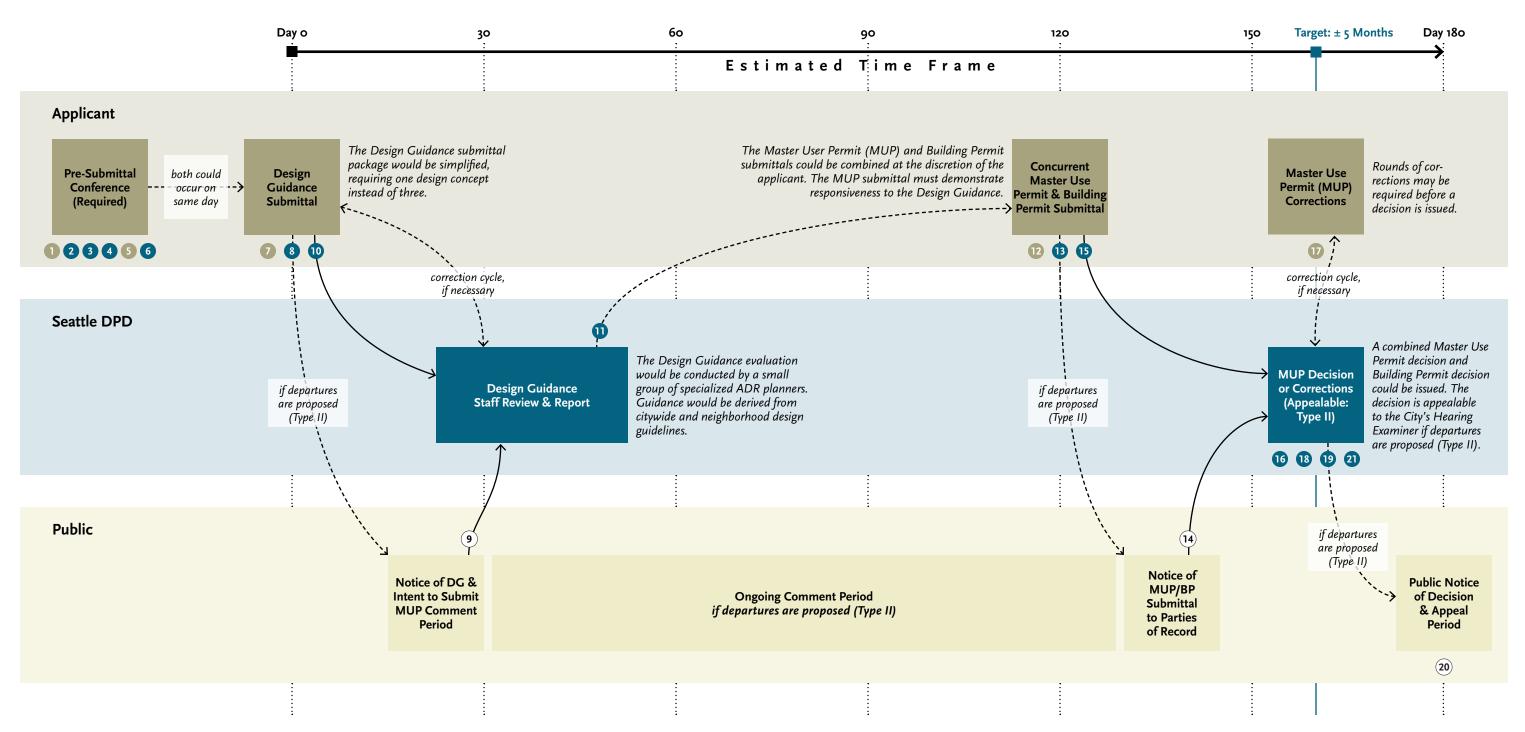
Summary

- Using the existing Administrative Design Review process for all new townhouse projects would place a large burden on both the applicant and DPD staff, while improving the public's ability to influence the design of future townhouse projects.
- DPD would incur costs of hiring additional planning staff. Various existing staff members would experience increased workload, which would slow DPD's overall flow of land use reviews. The monetary cost to DPD would likely be covered by permitting fees.
- Applicants would be most affected by this option, incurring significantly increased development and permitting costs and longer permit processing times. Applicants would also experience greater uncertainty due to the introduction of potential appeals.
- Option 1 is not an ideal or recommended approach due to the significant impacts it would place on the applicant and, to a lesser extent, DPD staff.
 No stakeholders and members of the public expressed support for Option 1, as the existing Administrative Design Review process would be out of proportion with the relatively small size of townhouse projects.

Draft Recommendation: Administrative Design Review (Option 2)

Process is streamlined compared to the existing Design Review process by reducing the number of steps from two (EDG + Design Recommendation) to one (Design Guidance). Applicants may more readily submit for a Building Permit at the same time as the Master Use Permit (MUP).

- Replaces the existing ADR process
- Allows development departures
- One ongoing public notice period for projects requesting departures
- If no departures, then decision is not appealable (Type I)
- If departures, then decision is appealable (Type II)



Draft Recommendation: Administrative Design Review (Option 2)

	Developer	Seattle DPD	Public	Fee & Staff Hours
Pre-submittal	 Applicant applies for a project number by completing and sending in a Preliminary Application form to the Applicant Services Center. The applicant must also fill out a Pre-Application Site Visit (PASV) form for a fee of \$124.50, these two things can happen simultaneously. Once a project number has been acquired and the site visit for the PASV has taken place, the applicant can then apply for the Pre-Submittal Conference (PSC) by filling out the Pre-Submittal Conference Application (PSCA) and sending it in to the Applicant Services Center. This is the application that will notify the DPD that the project will be undergoing the ADR process. Both the applicant and the planner must attend the PSC. The applicant may request—on the PSCA—other DPD or SDOT staff to be present in order to address outstanding site and building questions. If the applicant has building questions, this is an appropriate stage for a building permit representative to be present. This meeting is meant to also be the intake for the Design Guidance (DG) submittal packet which contains one (1) site, massing and preliminary design concept for the project site. If the applicant is not familiar with the process, they can choose to view this as an informational meeting, and then follow the drop-off submittal process outlined by the DPD. Fees for PSCs and additional hours of review are listed in the current version of the Fee Subtitle available online on DPD's "Fees" page at www.seattle.gov/dpd/about/fees. 	 2 A DPD planner is assigned from a sub-group of 3 or 5 ADR-trained planners within the pool of roughly 18 discretionary planners capable of performing full design reviews. 3 The planner shall visit the site prior to the PSC to assess site conditions and complete an annotated checklist of priority guidelines. Ideally, the applicant will have sent the planner the proposal beforehand so the planner can review the proposal while on site, prior to meeting with the applicant. 4 The planner shall review the PSCA and invite all relevant and requested DPD/SDOT staff to attend the PSC. The planner shall also submit the annotated checklist of priority guidelines to the applicant in advance of the PSC. The SDOT design guidance meeting may be combined with the PSC. 6 The planner's role at the PSC is to give the applicant general information on the review process and initial guidance on site, building and design issues. The applicant may choose to submit the DG package following the meeting. The planner may advise the applicant to come back for another PSC meeting if the PSCA materials do not appear to reflect an application that would meet requirements. 		\$124.50 + Planner Review Fee (typically 4 hours at \$250/ hour for research, site visit, annotated checklist of priority guidelines and pre- submittal meeting)
Design Guidance	The applicant may submit the project for review by preparing a Design Guidance submittal package at any time after a PSC. CAMs 105 (drop off submittals) and a new CAM to be developed specifically for ADR will detail the DG submittal requirements. Forms and instructions are available online at www.seattle.gov/dpd/publications/forms, or from the Applicant Services Center (ASC). Completed forms may be dropped off, mailed or faxed to the ASC. The intent of the DG package is to present an initial design proposal for review. The applicant shall provide 3 copies of the tabloid-sized (11 x 17 inches) DG packet (See new ADR CAM.) which includes one fully developed schematic design concept. Other specific items required at the time of DG submittal include: • Signed Letter of Authorization • Signed Financial Responsibility Form • Completed Drop-off Submittal Fee Worksheet and a check for \$2,070.00 (which covers the DG meeting, the intake appointment, and the notice fees for ADR) • Copy of PASV • Copy of Preliminary Application • Completed Application (See See new ADR CAM.) Attachment A, 3 copies of 11 x 17 DG packet • Copy of Pre-Submittal Conference Meeting Minute Notes (which can be sent to planner after completion). The applicant is responsible for uploading a digital version (.pdf file) of the DG package to the DPD's web site per instructions found at www.seattle.gov/dpd/pdfinstructions.	 After the applicant has submitted a complete application, Land Use Intake Bulletin staff will install the yellow placard to indicate that the site is undergoing land use review. For projects requesting departures, the public comment period will commence with the planner 'noticing' the proposed project, through mailers, to residents and property owners within 300 feet of the site. Notice requirements are specified in SMC 23.76.011. Notice of the application will also be provided in DPD's weekly Land Use Information Bulletin (available online at www. seattle.gov/dpd/notices) and the DG package will be posted on the web site. The public comment period will allow citizens to comment on all aspects of the project, including siting and design issues. After the application is approved and the public notice has been sent the planner takes the DG package to an Administrative Design Guidance Review meeting which is conducted by the assigned ADR-trained planner. Guidance would be derived from citywide and neighborhood design guidelines. The DG meeting should occur no later than 30 days after a complete DG application. The planner has 10 days following the DG meeting to create a brief Design Guidance report generated from citywide and neighborhood design guidelines, staff suggestions and comments received from the public. The DG report provides design guidance that must be addressed by the applicant in the MUP/BP submittal. All departures are identified and formalized in the DG report. 	9 For projects that request departures, community members have a chance to comment at any time until 2 weeks after the project has been submitted for MUP/BP. For comments to be considered in the Design Guidance report, comments must be submitted to the DPD within 2 weeks of the initial notice. Comments from community members are most effective when they address elements within the purview of the DR process, such as architectural concept and consistency and exterior finish materials. Notice procedures per SMC 23.76.011.	\$2,070.00 (includes 6 hours at \$250/hour for review and documentation)

Draft Recommendation: Administrative Design Review (Option 2)

	Developer	Seattle DPD	Public	Fee & Staff Hours
Master Use & Building Permits	After receiving the DG report, the applicant is permitted to schedule a combined Master Use Permit/Building Permit (MUP/BP) intake appointment. (An applicant can also choose to schedule MUP and BP intake appointments separately.) A MUP/BP is a consolidated permit including all required land use reviews (including the Design Review) as well as all required building permit reviews. All projects undergoing Design Review—including ADR—are required to enter the MUP process. The applicant must utilize the guidance from the planner to produce the MUP/BP set. It is the applicant's responsibility to make sure that all guidance is addressed. Failure to do so may add significant time to the process due to additional comment/correction rounds. Fees for MUP submittals and additional hours of review are listed in the Fee Subtitle at www.seattle.gov/dpd/about/fees. Forms and instructions are available online at www.seattle.gov/dpd/publications/forms or from the Applicant Services Center. See below for list of required submittal materials.	 13 For projects requesting departures, mailers are sent only to those parties of record who signed up to be notified of MUP submittal. The planner will also notice the MUP submittal on the DPD's website. Notice procedures for the MUP process are specified per SMC 23.76.012. 15 Upon receipt of the MUP/BP, the planner divides the plans and assigns them to various review stations depending on the nature of the proposed project. All MUP/BPs go through a land-use/zoning review and a Design Guidance review (both completed by the assigned ADR planner), a structural and ordinance review, an addressing station, an energy review, a drainage review, and a fire review at the very least. Additional reviews may include, but are not limited to: Department of Neighborhoods (DON), an Environmentally Critical Areas (ECA) review, a shoring review, a conveyance review, a mechanical review, and a geosoils review all depending on whether unique conditions on site trigger specific issues. 16 Each reviewer is responsible for reviewing the MUP/BP submittal for the information relevant to their specific station. If the reviewer feels the application is complete, he/she can 'approve' the plans for that particular review. However, if the reviewer feels the plans need clarifications or corrections, a Correction Notice is generated and sent to the applicant and the plans are dropped off at Plans Routing for the applicant to pick up. 	For projects that request departures, Parties of Record will be notified of the MUP/BP submittal. The public comment period will remain open for 14 days following the date of the MUP/BP notification.	\$1,000 (for the MUP if ADR is the only triggering item) + Planner Review Fee (typically 6 hours at \$250/ hour for Design Review and zoning review component of Building Permit) + Building Permit Fee (based on value of proposed construction)
Decision	 If correction notices have been generated, the applicant is responsible for: Picking up the plans from Plans Routing within 7 days of being notified, otherwise Plans Routing will send the plans to the applicant and bill them, Responding to all correction notices by updating drawings, forms. and plan sets, and Resubmitting all plan sets back to Plans Routing for another round of review. 	 18 After all correction rounds have been completed and approved the planner issues a MUP Decision. 19 If no departures are included, a Type I Decision is issued, and no further notice is required. If departures are included, a Type II Decision is issued and the planner publishes a Notice of Decision which is mailed to all parties of record and posted in the weekly Land Use Information Bulletin (available at www.seattle.gov/dpd/notices). A Type II Decision can be appealed to the City's Hearing Examiner. Procedures are specified in SMC 23.76.022. 21 If the MUP Decision is not appealed, the planner can issue a combined Master Use/Building Permit. If there are appeals, the permit cannot be issued until after the Hearing Examiner Process is complete and a decision has been made, per SMC 23.76.028. 	20 If a Type II Decision with departures is issued, community members have 2 weeks to appeal the decision following publication of the Notice of Decision. Procedures are specified in SMC 23.76.022.	Planner Review Fee (typically 2 hours at \$250/ hour)

MUP/BP Application Submittal Materials

- Six (6) sets of MUP/BP level plans and drawings which include exterior materials and colors, departure documentation, and justifying, in narrative form, any requested development standard departures.
- The MUP/BP set must also include: DPD Cover sheet, Site plan(s), Floor plans, Elevations, Landscape Plans, Survey, Sections, Wall/Floor/Door/Window Schedules, Details, Building Code Info/Diagrams, Civil Plans, Structural Plans, Shoring Plans, etc.
- Attachment B (See new ADR CAM.)

- Design Departure Matrix (a table of departure requests that compares the proposed design in quantitative terms to the code requirements)
- Signed Letter of Authorization
- Signed Financial Responsibility Form
- Copy of PASV
- 4 (at least) colored and shadowed elevations on a single sheet
- Energy Calculations and Equipment Sizing Calculations
- Structural Calculations
- Geotechnical Report

- Storm Drainage Report
- Water Availability Certificate
- Building or Mechanical Permit Contact Disclosure Form
- Special Inspection Schedule
- Geotechnical Inspection Schedule
- Letter of Intent to meet House Bill 1848 (if required)
- Colored Landscape plans
- SEPA application (if required)
- Administrative Conditional Use application (if required)

Draft Recommendation: Administrative Design Review (Option 2)

The summary below is based on analysis of project volume and staff time invested in Administrative Design Review over a three year period ending in September 2008. (See Status Report, pages 6–8.) Based on the data, it is projected lowering the threshold triggering design review from eight to three units, will add approximately 50 more projects to the design review workload each year. **Note**: Comparisons below are between no design review and projects that would undergo Option 2: Streamlined ADR.

Key Features

- Would reduce the design review process from two major steps—Early Design Guidance (EDG) and Design Review Recommendation—to one major step—Design Guidance (DG).
- Hybrid Decision: If departures are not requested, the project would require a Type I Decision which cannot be appealed. If departures are requested, the project would require a Type II Decision which would be subject to appeal.
- Would increase focus on a more substantial Pre-Submittal Conference which would include a full range of relevant reviewers.
- Master Use Permit (MUP) and Building Permit (BP) submittal would be combined, at the applicant's discretion.
- Design Guidance packet requirements (previously EDG) would be simplified to eliminate the need for three options and replaced with one scheme.
- For Type II Decisions, a consolidated public notice would be issued at the time of DG, with a separate MUP notice going to parties of record.
- All DG packages would be posted on the design review web site.
- More formalized time lines would be established to increase predictability.
- A subgroup of three or five ADR-trained planners would review all townhouse projects not subject to full Design Review.
- The assigned ADR-trained planner would prepare an abbreviated DG report after DG review.
- The assigned ADR planner would conduct both DG review and the zoning review (currently separate).
- The assigned project planner would perform a site visit prior to the Pre-Submittal Conference.
- An on-site ADR notice placard would be installed, rather than a large white MUP notice sign.

DPD Staffing & Costs

16-24 Design Review Planner Hours per Project

An average of twenty (20) Design Review planner hours are projected for each project, 46% fewer than the existing Administrative Design Review.

Training and Specialization of Existing DR Staff

Option 2 would be staffed by a subgroup of ADR-trained planners drawn from the existing pool of Design Review planners. Fifty (50) projects per year would generate approximately 1,000–1,200 billable review hours annually, which potentially could be accommodated at existing staffing levels with a modest impact to the overall flow of DPD reviews. Each of the specialized ADR planners would spend 15–25% of their total time on ADR projects.

Alternatively, the addition of one planner would accommodate the additional project reviews with little impact to existing workloads. This Planner II position would cost DPD salary, overhead and benefits.

DPD would incur costs for the training of up to five ADR planners. A three-day course would train planners on the new review and permitting procedures and design issues specific to townhouses. Assuming Planner II experience levels, this equates to approximately \$6,000 in staff time. If training were done inhouse, no additional training cost would be incurred. If outside design training were sought, this could be accomplished through a small consultant contract in the \$6,000–8,000 range.

Administrative, Processing and Management Cost

Implementing Option 2 would incur additional costs in the administration and management of associated MUP permits. These costs are incurred by a range of stations and employees, making them difficult to estimate. While this option could be implemented without adding more administrators or managers, it would add introduce another 50 projects with more complex processing requirements into the permitting stream, adding some modest delay to DPD's overall flow of land use permits. The new procedures introduced by Option 2 would require some additional training and coordination for various operations staff.

Additional Fee Revenue

Since DPD fees are structured to cover the full cost of review, revenue collected under this option would cover the cost of the program. Using a conservative estimate, 20 hours at \$250 per hour would produce an estimated \$5,000 in additional fees per project. Fifty (50) projects would generate \$250,000 annually. This amount would cover the cost of one additional planner, plus all associated administrative, processing and management costs.

Developer Cost & Time

Additional Fees

Option 2 would add permitting fees to development projects that otherwise would not have undergone design review. The fees are estimated to total \$5,000 per project (\$1,000 for the base PSC fee + \$1,500 for the base DG fee + \$2,500 for the base MUP fee), 46% less than fees collected under the current ADR process, Option 1.

Added Time

Design Review under Option 2 would add approximately 2-3 months to the permitting of small townhouse projects (3-8 units), which currently average 2 months for those not requiring a MUP. The 4-5 month time frame proposed in Option 2 is 40-60% less than that of the existing ADR process (Option 1).

Associated Costs

Beyond permitting fees, a range of development costs would be added to projects under Option 2. These include costs associated with holding the land and design services, both of which will likely be considerably less (by 40–60%) than Option 1 due to less processing time and a reduction in the complexity of DG packages. Using these benchmarks and input from stakeholders we estimate that associated costs are likely to be in the range of \$20,000–25,000 per project, instead of the range of \$40,000–60,000 reported for the current ADR process. DPD would monitor actual costs during a pilot period to identify the true added cost to development and adjust appropriately.

Public Involvement Opportunity

Early Notice and Comment Period

For project proposals requesting departures, Option 2 adds a public notice and comment opportunity early in the project review at the time of Design Guidance. This improves public involvement over the typical current townhouse review, which requires no noticing early in the entitlement process. For project proposals requesting departures (Type II Decisions), all who commented would become parties of record and receive notice of MUP application. No noticing would occur for projects not seeking departures (Type I Decisions).

Consistent Web Site Posting

All DR packages would be posted on the design review portion of the web site shortly after submission.

Appealable

All townhouse projects that include design departures would be subject to an appeals period to the city's Hearing Examiner after land use decision, as consistent with Type II land use decisions. However, if a project does not include departures, it would be considered a Type I Decision with no appeal period.



Draft Recommendation: Administrative Design Review (Option 2)

Pros

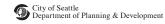
- Would improve design quality and variety of townhouse projects by bringing all townhouse project through ADR.
- Would avoid micro-permitting by lowering threshold for design review to 3 units.
- Would yield 40–60% shorter permit processing times than existing ADR.
- Would yield 46% lower permitting fees than existing ADR.
- Would reduce planner review hours from an average of 37 to a target of 16–24 hours.
- May be achievable through training and specialization of existing staff.
- Would significantly improve the public's ability to comment and affect townhouse projects.
- Would be relatively easy to implement since Option 2 builds on existing process framework.

Cons

- Changes in DPD permitting procedures would require some adjustments.
- Would incur the cost of training specialized ADR staff.
- Specialization could limit flexibility in assigning DPD staff.
- Would incur nominal costs in the administration and management of associated MUP permits.
- Would add some modest delay to DPD's overall flow of land use permits.
- Would add approximately \$5,000 in additional permit fees for applicants.
- Would add approximately 2–3 months in permit processing time for applicants.
- Would add an estimated \$20,000-25,000 per townhouse project for applicants.

Summary

- Through evaluation and discussion with DPD staff, managers, stakeholders and members of the public, Option 2 was consistently supported as a viable choice for ADR. Compared with extending the existing ADR process, Option 2 would reduce the time and cost burden on both DPD and the applicant. The public would see improvements in its ability to comment on and affect townhouse projects.
- Option 2 streamlines the existing ADR process by reducing its complexity to better fit the smaller townhouse projects. This option does not require significant additional processes to be developed and can therefore be executed in a straightforward and timely fashion.

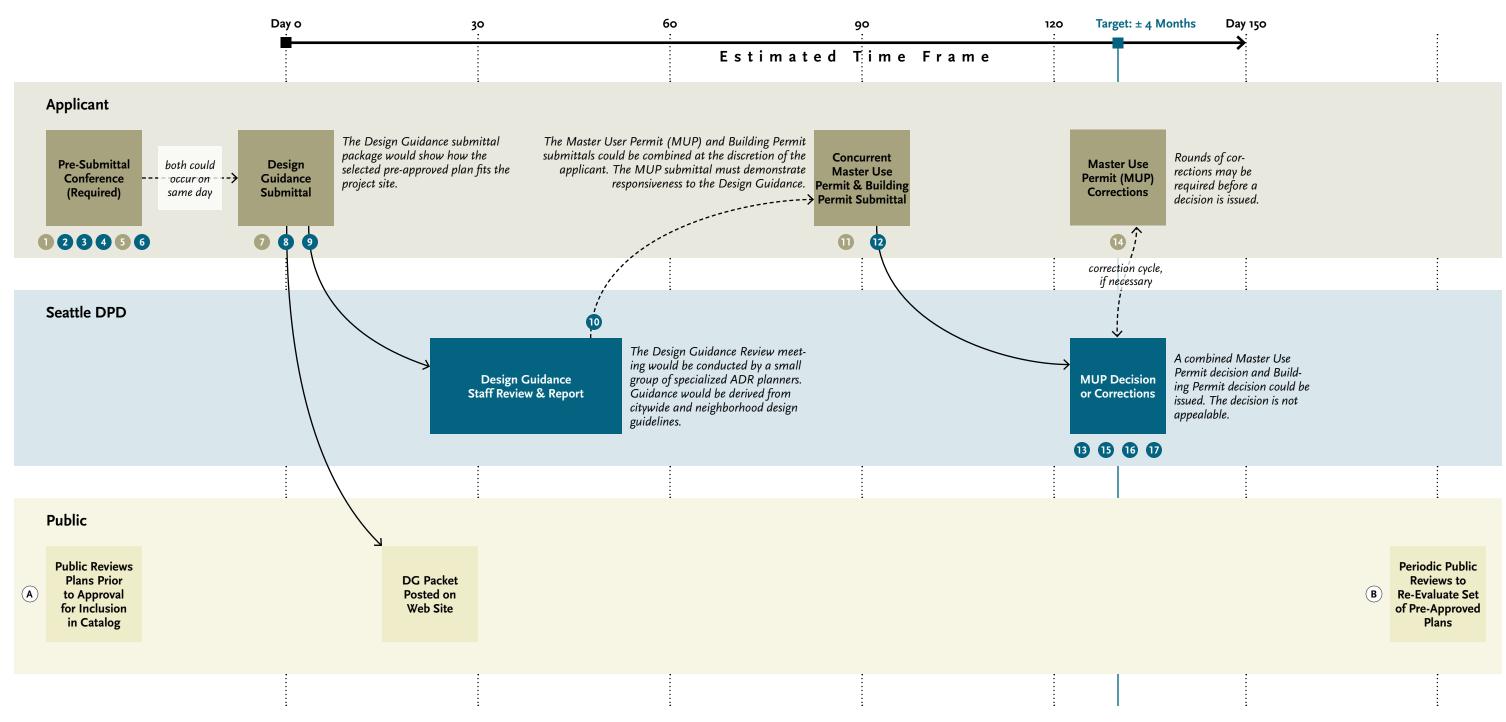


Option 3: Pre-Approved Plans

Option 3 employs some form of pre-approved design plans for townhouses. The pre-approved plans would be created through a public process led by the Department of Planning and Development, possibly through a competition or other collaboration. DPD would certify each qualifying plan. The set of pre-approved plans could undergo periodic public reviews to determine if any should be disqualified.

Designs would be scaled to fit a variety of typical lot or block configurations in Seattle. Pre-approved plans could have varying degrees of specificity:

- Detailed site plans with massing diagrams (developed via competition or submitted for inclusion by applicants)
- Neighborhood-specific design guidebook with conceptual site plan and focus on interface between building and street, key architectural elements and relationships to adjacent properties and natural features
- Voluntary use of pre-approved plans
- Departures not allowed—some flexibility would be built into plans
- Decision not appealable (Type I)



Option 3: Pre-Approved Plans

	Developer	Seattle DPD	Public	Fee & Staff Hours
Pre-submittal	 Applicant applies for a project number by completing and sending in a Preliminary Application form to the Applicant Services Center. The applicant must also fill out a Pre-Application Site Visit (PASV) form for a fee of \$124.50, these two things can happen simultaneously. Once a project number has been acquired and the site visit for the PASV has taken place, the applicant can then apply for the Pre-Submittal Conference (PSC) by filling out the Pre-Submittal Conference Application (PSCA) and sending it in to the Applicant Services Center. This is the application that will notify the DPD which pre-approved plan the applicant has selected for the project undergoing ADR. Both the applicant and the planner must attend the PSC. The applicant may request—on the PSCA—other DPD or SDOT staff to be present in order to address outstanding site and building questions. If the applicant has building questions, this is an appropriate stage for a building permit representative to be present. This meeting is meant to also be the intake for the Design Guidance (DG) submittal packet which contains a site and massing drawing that shows the pre-approved plan on the project site. If the applicant is not familiar with the process, they can choose to view this as an informational meeting, and then follow the drop-off submittal process outlined by the DPD. Fees for PSCs and additional hours of review are listed in the current version of the Fee Subtitle available online on DPD's "Fees" page at www.seattle.gov/dpd/about/fees. 	 2 A DPD planner is assigned from a sub-group of 3 or 5 ADR-trained planners within the pool of roughly 18 discretionary planners capable of performing full design reviews. 3 The planner shall visit the project site prior to the PSC to assess conditions and confirm that the applicant-selected pre-approved site plan is appropriate. The planner will also complete a pre-approved plan site assessment form, noting any unique site characteristics that will require modifications or are better accommodated by a different pre-approved plan. 4 The planner shall review the PSCA and invite all relevant and requested DPD/SDOT staff to attend the PSC. The planner shall also submit the pre-approved plan site assessment form to the applicant in advance of the PSC. The SDOT design guidance meeting may be combined with the PSC. 6 The planner's role at the PSC is to give the applicant general information on the review process and guidance on site, building and design issues. The applicant may choose to submit the DG package following the meeting. The planner may advise the applicant to come back for another PSC meeting if the PSCA materials do not appear to reflect an application that would meet requirements. 	A Public review will occur during the process by which pre-approved plans would be created through a public process led by the Department of Planning and Development.	\$124.50 + Planner Review Fee (typically 4 hours at \$250/ hour for research, site visit, annotated checklist of priority guidelines and pre- submittal meeting)
Design Guidance	Guidance submittal package at any time after a PSC. CAMs 105 (drop off submittals) and a new CAM to be developed specifically for ADR will detail the DG submittal requirements. Forms and instructions are available online at www.seattle.gov/dpd/publications/forms, or from the Applicant Services Center (ASC). Completed forms may be dropped off, mailed or faxed to the ASC. The intent of the DG package is to present the preapproved plan design proposal for review. The applicant shall provide 3 copies of the tabloid-sized (11 x 17 inches) DG packet (See new ADR CAM.) which includes one fully developed schematic design concept. Other specific items required at the time of DG submittal include: • Signed Letter of Authorization • Signed Financial Responsibility Form • Completed Drop-off Submittal Fee Worksheet and a check for \$2,070.00 (which covers the DG meeting, the intake appointment, and the notice fees for ADR) • Copy of PASV • Copy of Preliminary Application • Completed Application (See See new ADR CAM.) Attachment A, 3 copies of 11 x 17 DG packet • Copy of Pre-Submittal Conference Meeting Minute Notes (which can be sent to planner after completion). The applicant is responsible for uploading a digital version (.pdf file) of the DG package to the DPD's web site per instructions found at www.seattle.gov/dpd/pdfinstructions.	 3 After the applicant has submitted a complete application, Land Use Intake Bulletin staff will install the yellow placard to indicate that the site is undergoing land use review. Notice of the application will also be provided in DPD's weekly Land Use Information Bulletin (available online at www.seattle.gov/dpd/notices) and the DG package will be posted on the web site. 3 After the application is approved and the public notice has been sent the planner takes the DG package to an Administrative Design Guidance Review meeting which is conducted by the assigned ADR-trained planner. Guidance would be derived from citywide and neighborhood design guidelines. The DG meeting should occur no later than 30 days after a complete DG application. 10 The planner has 10 days following the DG meeting to create a brief Design Guidance report generated from citywide and neighborhood design guidelines, staff suggestions and comments received from the public. The DG report provides design guidance that must be addressed by the applicant in the MUP/BP submittal. All departures are identified and formalized in the DG report. 		\$2,070.00 (includes 6 hours at \$250/hour for review and documentation)

Option 3: Pre-Approved Plans

	Developer	Seattle DPD	Public	Fee & Staff Hours
Master Use & Building Permits	After receiving the DG report, the applicant is permitted to schedule a combined Master Use Permit/Building Permit (MUP/BP) intake appointment. (An applicant can also choose to schedule MUP and BP intake appointments separately.) A MUP/BP is a consolidated permit including all required land use reviews (including the Design Review) as well as all required building permit reviews. All projects undergoing Design Review—including ADR—are required to enter the MUP process. The applicant must utilize the guidance from the planner to produce the MUP/BP set. It is the applicant's responsibility to make sure that all guidance is addressed. Failure to do so may add significant time to the process due to additional comment/correction rounds. Fees for MUP submittals and additional hours of review are listed in the Fee Subtitle at www.seattle.gov/dpd/about/fees. Forms and instructions are available online at www.seattle.gov/dpd/publications/forms or from the Applicant Services Center. See below for list of required submittal materials.	 Upon receipt of the MUP/BP, the planner divides the plans and assigns the different review stations. Reviews are project specific, so this will not be known ahead of time. All MUP/BPs go through a land-use/zoning review and a Design Guidance review (both completed by the assigned ADR planner), a structural and ordinance review, an addressing station, an energy review, a drainage review, and a fire review at the very least. Additional reviews may include, but are not limited to: Department of Neighborhoods (DON), an Environmentally Critical Areas (ECA) review, a shoring review, a conveyance review, a mechanical review, and a geosoils review all depending on whether unique conditions on site trigger specific issues. Each reviewer is responsible for reviewing the MUP/BP submittal for the information relevant to their specific station. If the reviewer feels the application is complete, he/she can 'approve' the plans for that particular review. However, if the reviewer feels the plans need clarifications or corrections, a Correction Notice is generated and sent to the applicant and the plans are dropped off at Plans Routing for the applicant to pick up. 		\$1,000 (for the MUP if ADR is the only triggering item) + Planner Review Fee (typically 6 hours at \$250/ hour for Design Review and zoning review component of Building Permit) + Building Permit Fee (based on value of proposed construction)
Decision	 If correction notices have been generated, the applicant is responsible for: Picking up the plans from Plans Routing within 7 days of being notified, otherwise Plans Routing will send the plans to the applicant and bill them, Responding to all correction notices by updating drawings, forms. and plan sets, and Resubmitting all plan sets back to Plans Routing for another round of review. 	 15 After all correction rounds have been completed and approved the planner issues a MUP Decision. 16 Since no departures are permitted, a Type I Decision is issued, and no further notice is required. 17 Since the MUP Decision cannot be appealed, the planner issues a combined Master Use/Building Permit. 	B Periodic public review of the set of pre-approved plans could be conducted to determine if any should be disqualified from pre-approved status.	Planner Review Fee (typically 2 hours at \$250/ hour)

MUP/BP Application Submittal Materials

- Six (6) sets of MUP/BP level plans and drawings which include exterior materials and colors, departure documentation, and justifying, in narrative form, any requested development standard departures.
- The MUP/BP set must also include: DPD Cover sheet, Site plan(s), Floor plans, Elevations, Landscape Plans, Survey, Sections, Wall/Floor/Door/Window Schedules, Details, Building Code Info/Diagrams, Civil Plans, Structural Plans, Shoring Plans, etc.
- Attachment B (See new ADR CAM.)

- Signed Letter of Authorization
- Signed Financial Responsibility Form
- Copy of PASV
- 4 (at least) colored and shadowed elevations on a single sheet
- Energy Calculations and Equipment Sizing Calculations
- Structural Calculations
- Geotechnical Report
- Storm Drainage Report

- Water Availability Certificate
- Building or Mechanical Permit Contact Disclosure Form
- Special Inspection Schedule
- Geotechnical Inspection Schedule
- Letter of Intent to meet House Bill 1848 (if required)
- Colored Landscape plans
- SEPA application (if required)
- Administrative Conditional Use application (if required)

Option 3: Pre-Approved Plans

The summary below is based on analysis of project volume and staff time invested in Administrative Design Review over a three year period ending in September 2008. (See Status Report, pages 6–8.) By lowering the threshold triggering design review from eight to three units, implementing any one of these options will add approximately 50 more projects to the design review workload each year.

Key Features

- Would provide predictability for applicant, staff and public.
- · Would yield shorter permitting times.
- The MUP decision would not be appealable.
- Design Guidance (DG) would ensure that the applicant-selected preapproved plan is compatible with the site and context.
- The assigned project planner would perform a site visit prior to the Pre-Submittal Conference.
- The Design Review package would be simplified.
- The MUP and BP submittals would be combined into one application.
- An ADR Planner would conduct both the DG and zoning reviews.

DPD Staffing & Costs

10 Design Review Planner Hours per Project

Ten (10) Design Review planner hours are projected for each project, 73% fewer than Option 1: Existing Administrative Design Review.

Training and Specialization of Existing DR Staff

DPD would incur costs for training planners on how to use the pre-approved plans. This would include how to conduct a site analysis and evaluate the best application of a pre-approved plan to a given site. If training were done inhouse, no additional training cost would be incurred. If outside design training were sought, this could be accomplished through a small consultant contract in the \$2,000–4,000 range. The process could be staffed by the existing pool of ADR planners, with possible addition of a 0.5 FTE Planner. When the program is up and running, it is estimated that the 50 additional projects would add 500 hours of staff time. The additional cost for a 0.5 FTE Planner II, if required, would be \$47,790.

Administrative, Processing and Management Cost

Option 3 would result in additional cost impacts of administrating and managing the MUP permit, as well as the process to deem plans pre-approved. Several methods could be employed to yield a catalog of pre-approved plans:

- Designers or developers could submit townhouse designs to a peer and public review consisting of at least one public meeting and comment period. DPD would formally approve and catalog acceptable designs. The time required to establish a framework for the process are estimated to be 200 hours plus 20 hours per submitted plan for review.
- DPD could lead a public process to develop pre-approved plans that respond to different neighborhood contexts. The time required to engage the design community and public in this process are estimated to be 1,000 hours per neighborhood.
- DPD could develop a catalog of pre-approved plans that are vetted through a public review process and then approval. The time and resources required to administer this process are estimated to be 200 hours, and may require consultant assistance in the \$40,000 fee range.
- A design competition could be held, with winning designs formalized and published in a catalog. The time and resources required to plan, implement and document the competition and results are estimated to be 300 hours of staff time, \$50,000 in consultant fees and potentially prize money for winning entries.

Additional Fee Revenue

Since DPD fees are structured to cover the full cost of review, revenue collected under this option would cover the cost of administering the program once a catalog of pre-approved designs was established. Assuming a review process similar to Option 2, 20 hours at \$250 per hour would produce an estimated \$5,000 in additional fees per project. Fifty (50) projects would generate \$250,000 annually. This amount would cover the cost of one additional planner, plus all associated administrative, processing and management costs. These fees might also cover costs associated with the incremental review and approval of new designs, were such a method employed.

Developer Cost & Time

Additional Fees

Option 3 would add significant permitting fees to development projects that otherwise would not have undergone design review. The fees are estimated to total \$5,000 per project (\$1,000 for the base PSC fee + \$1,500 for the base DG fee + \$2,500 for the base MUP fee), 46% less than fees collected under the current ADR process, Option 1.

Added Time

Design Review under Option 3 would add approximately 1–2 months to the permitting of small townhouse projects (3–8 units), which currently average 2 months for those not requiring a MUP. The 3–4 month time frame proposed in Option 3 is 70–80% less than that of the existing ADR process (Option 1).

Associated Costs

Beyond permitting fees, costs with holding the land would be added to development projects under Option 3. Since additional design fees likely would not be incurred, additional costs would be in the range of \$5,000–10,000 per project.

Public Involvement Opportunity

Participation in Pre-Approval of Plans

In Option 3, the main opportunity for the public to participate would be during the creation and review of pre-approved plans.

Option 3: Pre-Approved Plans

Pros

- Would improve design quality by bringing all townhouse projects through ADR.
- Would avoid micro-permitting by lowering threshold for design review to 3 units.
- Would provide certainty in development review.
- Would yield 70-80% shorter permit processing times than existing ADR.
- Would yield 46% lower permitting fees than existing ADR.
- Would reduce planner review hours from an average of 37 to a target of 10 hours.
- May be achievable through training and specialization of existing staff.
- Would improve the public's ability to comment and affect townhouse projects through the process of establishing and periodically re-evaluating pre-approval status for plans.

Cons

- Could increase the possibility of generating incompatible, cookie-cutter architecture.
- Would require significant initial investment in creation of pre-approved plans for an untested process. During the 1 to 2 year plan development process, many projects would continue to be developed without the benefit of any design review.
- Would provide limited opportunity for public comment after initial plan approval process.
- · Would require some cost for training.
- Would incur nominal costs in the administration and management of associated MUP permits.
- Would add some modest delay to DPD's overall flow of land use permits.
- Would add approximately \$5,000 in additional permit fees for applicants.
- Would add approximately 1–2 months in permit processing time for applicants.
- Would add an estimated \$5,000–10,000 per townhouse project for applicants.

Summary

- Evaluation and discussion with DPD staff, managers, stakeholders and member of the public provided a wide range of opinions and levels of support for Option 3, Pre-Approved Plans. Many in the development community were attracted to this option because of the increased certainty while most architects opposed the idea. DPD staff felt the pre-approved plan approach held promise, but further discussion would be required to determine how it could be implemented. The example of the High Point Design Manual was considered successful.
- Depending on the method employed, one to two (or more) years would be required to create a catalog of pre-approved plans. During this time, projects would continue to be built without any design review.
- Implementing Option 3 would require a significant amount of additional work to refine and formalize the pre-approval process. This option may be viable at a future time with further exploration and development.

